ROSEMOUNT

VILLAGE PLAN 2018 – 2023

Ireland's European Structural and Investment Funds Programmes 2014-2020
Co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union

LEADER

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas

Department of Rural and Community Development
An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail

LCDC
Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil na hIarmhí
Westmeath Local Community Development Committee

WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae na h-Iarmhí

CONTENTS

EXPLANATION OF PROCESS

Blue Moss was commissioned by Westmeath Community Development to undertake an Action Planning Initiative for seven rural towns and villages in County Westmeath, one of which is Rosemount. This initiative will act in support of the regeneration of these rural towns and villages and will prioritise projects for development in each of the seven areas.

Action planning for rural towns and villages has been set out in the LEADER Local Development Strategy for County Westmeath under the sub-theme of Rural Towns. This sub-theme supports the regeneration of rural towns, promoting them as attractive places to visit, live and do business in. This is to be achieved by building on the economic strengths and infrastructure of the area while also addressing the key challenges for business, community and recreation.

The process involving all seven villages took place over six months between January and June 2018. Blue Moss used a participatory facilitation process called Outcomes Based Accountability or OBA with all 7 villages; a process that is interactive and aimed at turning words into action.

Process Stages:

i. Development of a Vision Statement and underpinning values- What is good about living in the village and what would the group like to see in the future?

ii. SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the village. The information gathered was then considered against statistical data, principally drawing upon a census completed in 2016.

iii. Deeper consideration of the wellbeing outcomes that the group wanted to see for their village and connected people, and the projects and activities that would be needed to create these. This led to the point of the first draft of the plan being developed which was circulated with the group.

iv. Reflection, amendment and agreement of previously identified outcomes and actions within the draft plan.

v. Joint meeting with the other villages to consider aspects of their individual plans that overlapped and how the villages could support each other in

reaching their goals.

1. Castletown Geoghegan
2. Collinstown
3. Coole
4. Milltownpass
5. Multyfarnham
6. Rosemount
7. Streete

vi. Identification of potential partners and strategies – village representatives met with public bodies and agencies relevant to their plans.

vii. Joint launch of all seven community plans hosted by Westmeath Community Development.

ROSEMOUNT

Rosemount is a small rural community situated on the southern tip of County Westmeath. The area is situated close to the Midland Gateway towns of Mullingar (17 miles), Athlone (14 miles) and Tullamore (15 miles) with the town of Moate just 4 miles away. Located south of the village is the old disused Athlone - Mullingar railway line, now a greenway cycle track. The old Dublin - Galway road R446 and its replacement motorway M6 are also close by to the south of the parish.

County Westmeath has an undulating landscape with a number of distinguishing features including the Esker Riada which runs through the parish of Rosemount. Towering over the picturesque village to the North is Knockastia (or Cnoc Aiste), which at 200 m (656 ft) is one of the highest points in County Westmeath. The hill, like Rosemount itself, is steeped in history as part of the ancient Barony of Moycashel.

The focal points of the village are the local shop, pub, primary school, church, community centre and GAA grounds. The village itself has no concentration of dwellings with most of the houses near the village dispersed in ribbon development format on the roads leading out into the adjacent countryside. The GAA grounds / Community Centre is the central hub of the village with a multi-purpose hall and recently renovated kitchen facility and several pitches. With nine Senior County titles to its name, the Black and Amber club rates as one of the best in Westmeath.

The Rosemount community is noted for its community spirit and for its belief that all residents share in the responsibility to bring about an inclusive and connected society.

[info taken from Rosemount 2020 Community Needs Analysis]

OUR VISION

The people of Rosemount will benefit from, contribute to and have pride in their village: a growing, healthy, well-resourced community, sustained through the nurturing of the following generations and respectful of & in harmony with its outstanding natural environment and heritage.

WE VALUE

Pride of Place: Taking pride in our people, our outstanding natural environment and our rich heritage

Community Spirit: Pulling together, seeking to involve and include all, acting as good neighbours and having each other's backs

Respect: Respecting our similarities and differences and respecting our shared natural environment

Our Young People: Nurturing and working with our young people as the leaders of Rosemount's future

Our Drive: Our competitive spirit, desire for success and strong work ethic

Honesty & Integrity: How we live and work as a village

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND KEY FINDINGS

The community spent time considering the current context and status of Rosemount. This included reflecting on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats connected to the village. This following is a record of the views of those who participated.

STRENGTHS

- Central location
- Neighbours' support
- Natural environment. Natural beauty – Hill / historical
- great facilities & brilliant school (also access to Moate school)
- GAA – pitch / track / hall. GAA sporting tradition
- The hill – focal point / historical [quarry needs attention]. Heritage
- Sense of security. Safe place to live
- Low unemployment
- Great community spirit / volunteerism
- Social initiative
- Generous with time and money
- Card game
- Good mix of skills
- Generosity
- Drama group

WEAKNESSES

- No/bad broadband
- No shop
- No public transport
- No industry rather than / opportunities outside of construction
- Limited sporting activity other that GAA – cycling
- Bad local roads
- Lack of activities for teenagers
- Ageing population / declining population
- Limited continuity in activity and forward planning
- Rural v urban focus by departments etc – planning
- Poor youth scene – different generational focus. Only GAA focus. No place to meet
- No public water (water system is piped to within 5 miles)
- No council services – de-icing, snow ploughs etc
- Everyone knows your business
- You have to travel for everything

OPPORTUNITIES

- Broadband
- Local planning laws
- Greenway – tourism
- Promote the Hill / walks
- Heritage (Kill graveyard)
- New stand in GAA pitch
- Ballymahon – Centre Parcs
- Community garden
- Reopen shop
- Local link bus – tourism/elderly
- More houses in Rosemount
- If Athlone becomes a city – indirect impact
- Working from home
- National promotion of health & well being
- Taking care of our elderly
- More youth activities

THREATS

- Windfarm – dependent upon location / impact on studio
- Numbers falling in the school
- Planning – lack of sites / planning against one-off houses
- Quarry/ damage to the natural environment – beginning to decay/become derelict – fly tipping occurring
- Urbanisation – all resources going to urban areas / decline in local services
- Emigration – relocation / decreasing population
- Preference for urban living
- Shop closing
- Church numbers decreasing
- Poor infrastructure – roads / footpaths / lighting
- Rural crime
- Losing the knowledge and wisdom of the elderly

CONSIDERATION OF COUNTY WIDE AND VILLAGE CENSUS INFORMATION

Participants also considered a range of census information connected to Rosemount and to County Westmeath. Although there was some concern that the census information did not correspond directly to what local people understand as 'the village', there were broad reflections on pertinent information. The following was recorded.

Housing: The low number of houses built; The number of derelict houses – 35; 40% of housing has either singles or a couple; 2001 – 2010 – 25 houses built. 2011 & following – 2 (?)

Health: Westmeath suicide rate is higher than national average; Majority – good-very good health, yet children have 2nd highest hospital admission at county level (respiratory)

Population: Westmeath county population is very small; Low no of children in Rosemount - impact on the future. Only 44 under age of 12 / 89 under the age of 18; Very few foreign nationals; Biggest age group in parish is 65 – 69 years – high elderly population

Education and employment: High number of people that stopped education at a young age; High % of management level people in Rosemount; What will next generation do with parish land? 0 agricultural workers; Number of people working outside of Westmeath – 7,320

Tourism: Amount of people passing through the area for tourism (need for signage)

Energy sources: No natural gas usage – still turf reliant households

QUALITY OF LIFE CONDITIONS

In considering how they would like the village in the future, local people thought that the following elements were vital:

➢ A clean and safe environment
➢ Good communication and connectivity with our wider communities
➢ Sustained activities and facilities that enable all village residents to be included and involved in village life
➢ A village that sustains our next generations
➢ Protection and promotion of our village heritage and natural environment
➢ A healthy community
➢ Access to good education and primary health care

OUR OUTCOMES

The primary intention of this plan is to enable people in and around Rosemount to achieve their intended vision for the village:

The people of Rosemount will benefit from, contribute to and have pride in their village: a growing, healthy, well-resourced community sustained through the nurturing of the following generations and respectful of & in harmony with its outstanding natural environment and heritage.

This will be achieved through a focus on the three long term strategic themes across which fall 10 outcomes:

THEME 1:   Health & Social Wellbeing Sustainable

Outcome 1:   All people of Rosemount have a sense of belonging to the village and the opportunity of involvement in village life

Outcome 2:   All people of Rosemount can engage with life / have a social life within the village and wider community

Outcome 3:   All people will feel safe in Rosemount

Outcome 4:   All people of Rosemount can have daily community contact and access to daily basics & services

THEME 2:   Sustainable Environment & Infrastructure

Outcome 5:   Rosemount's heritage and beautiful natural environment will be celebrated and sustained

Outcome 6:   Rosemount will have adequate infrastructure to enable locals and visitors to access the village's unique assets and natural environment

Outcome 7:   The next generation can remain in Rosemount in appropriate high standard housing

Outcome 8:   All people of Rosemount can access good quality digital communication for a positive work, family and social life

THEME 3:   Education & Economy

Outcome 9:   Rosemount offers employment opportunities within the village

Outcome 10: Rosemount is widely recognised as a tourist destination for its heritage and beautiful natural environment

Theme One: Health and Social Wellbeing

Outcome 1: All people of Rosemount have a sense of belonging to the village and the opportunity of involvement in village life				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Develop and fully utilise Community Hall: Offer a range of activities for all ages (especially young people & elderly)	‣ Increase in hall usage ‣ Increase in range of activities offered ‣ Increase in engagement in activities by young people ‣ Increase in engagement in activities by the elderly ‣ Increased sense of belonging to the village	Short	Local activity and sport groups/clubs	
b) Ensure good communication across the village via a WhatsApp group	‣ Regular communication of village activity ‣ Increased involvement in activity ‣ Increased sense of belonging to the village	Short	Local activity and sport groups/clubs	
c) Develop a Rosemount calendar or booklet of information & contact nos. (link with website)	‣ Increased knowledge of village activity ‣ Increased involvement in activity ‣ Increased sense of belonging to the village	Short	Westmeath Community Development Local activity and sport groups/clubs/businesses	Leader Programme 2014 - 2020

Outcome 2: All people of Rosemount can engage with life / have a social life within the village and wider community				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Explore a Community shared/rota weekend transport	‣ Increased numbers of people socialising within and outside of Rosemount ‣ Increased connection to the wider community	Short	Local community	
b) Weekly bus service for the elderly to ……	‣ Increased numbers of elderly travelling outside of village on a weekly basis ‣ Increased sense of health and well being	Short	Local Link	
c) Playground development	‣ Increased opportunity for outdoor play with other children & young people ‣ Increased social interaction	Short	Westmeath Community Development	Leader Programme 2014 - 2020

Outcome 3: All people will feel safe in Rosemount				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Have a periodic community Garda physical presence	‣ Increased access to community police ‣ Increased sense of safety	Short	An Garda Síochána	
b) Create or widen footpath	‣ Increased numbers of people walking within the village ‣ Increased safety for pedestrians	Medium	Westmeath County Council, Roads Department	Annual Roads Programme Community Involvement Scheme

c) LED street lighting, especially by the school	‣ Increased sense of safety	Short	Westmeath County Council, Roads Department	Public Lighting Budget

Outcome 4: All people of Rosemount can have daily community contact and access to daily basics & services				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Develop a community central point/hub for 'drop in' (especially for the elderly)	‣ Increased connections across the community ‣ Increased socialisation within the elderly community ‣ Increased sense of belonging ‣ Increased positive mental health	Medium	Westmeath Community Development - Age Friendly Department	Westmeath Community Development - Age Friendly Department
b) Sell daily food basics/essentials - Explore Community Shop Model	‣ Increased access to daily food basics ‣ Decreased travel outside of village for daily basics	Medium	Westmeath Community Development Westmeath County Council, Community Development Section Pobal	Leader Programme 2014 - 2020 Dormant Accounts Pobal Scheme
c) Outreach health services for elderly (Chiropodist; community nurse…)	‣ Increased access to health services within village ‣ Increased positive physical health	Long	HSE Ireland Local Health Centres	

THEME 2: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Outcome 5: Rosemount's heritage and beautiful natural environment will be celebrated and sustained				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Archive history from locals (Fr Jimmy)	‣ Physical archives of local heritage ‣ Increased knowledge of local history within village	Short	Westmeath County Council Heritage Officer	Westmeath County Council Heritage Officer
b) Enhance the hill – visually appealing - Fence/hoarding around the quarry with Celtic murals	‣ Increased appreciation of hill ‣ Increased respectful use of the hill	Short	Westmeath County Council Tourism Officer Irish Trails	

Outcome 6: Rosemount will have adequate infrastructure to enable locals and visitors to access the village's unique assets and natural environment				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Improve road surfaces	‣ Increased safe road travel ‣ Decrease in road traffic incidents	Short → Long	Westmeath County Council, Roads Department	Annual Roads Programme
b) Have a safe walk/cycle route from Greenway to the village and through village	‣ Increased number of cyclists visiting Rosemount ‣ Increased safe cycle and pedestrian travel ‣ Increase in positive physical health of villagers	Medium	Westmeath County Council, Roads Department Westmeath Community Development Department for Transport, Tourism and Sport Transport Infrastructure Ireland	Westmeath County Council Greenway Plan Outdoor Recreation Fund

c) Road signage throughout Rosemount re natural environment, heritage and rural road signs	‣ Increased awareness of village assets ‣ Increased visitation of village assets ‣ Increased celebration of and pride in village	Medium	Westmeath County Council Tourism Officer Westmeath County Council Heritage Officer	

Outcome 7: The next generation can remain in Rosemount in appropriate high standard housing				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Community support for collective planning permission/housing	‣ Increased numbers of affordable housing ‣ Increased numbers of young people remaining in Rosemount ‣ Long term sustainability of Rosemount population	Long	Westmeath County Council, Planning Department	National Development Plan County Development Plan
b) Explore / Lobby for efficient energy sources & utilities	‣ Increased choice of efficient energy sources ‣ Decrease in use of unsustainable energy sources ‣ Decrease in air pollutants	Long	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) Westmeath Community Development	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) Leader Programme 2014 - 2020

Outcome 8: All people of Rosemount can access good quality digital communication for a positive work, family and social life				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Lobby relevant bodies and County Council Broadband Officer for quality broadband and mobile phone service	‣ Increase in broadband speed and quality ‣ Increase in mobile phone reception ‣ Increase in quality communication options ‣ Increase in ability to work from home ‣ Decreased negative impact on work, family and social life	Short	Westmeath County Council Broadband Officer Mobile Phone Companies	National Plan for Broadband

THEME 3: ECONOMY & EDUCATION

Outcome 9: Rosemount offers employment opportunities within the village				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Creation of a business hub / hall for high speed broadband and business connections	‣ Increased opportunity to run business from home ‣ Increased collaboration across local businesses	Medium	Local Enterprise Office Local Businesses & self employed	Local Enterprise Office
b) Advertise local businesses	‣ Increased wider awareness of local business ‣ Increased revenue for local businesses ‣ Increased sustainability of local business ‣ Increased local employment	Medium	Local businesses	Local Business sponsorship
c) Lobby for reduced/abolished rates for rural business	‣ Increased sustainability of existing local business ‣ Increased number of local businesses ‣ Increased local employment	Short	Westmeath County Council Finance Department National Valuation Office	
d) Consider and promote new business opportunities e.g. church as wedding venue	‣ Increased use of existing village assets ‣ Increased number of businesses ‣ Increased number of visitors to Rosemount ‣ Increased local employment	Medium	Westmeath County Council Local Enterprise Team Local Businesses	

Outcome 10: Rosemount is widely recognised as a tourist destination for its heritage and beautiful natural environment				
Action Project	Indicators of success	Timeframe	Potential Partners	Strategy and funding programme links
a) Information signage at main heritage & environment sites – link with trail	‣ Increased awareness of Rosemount's heritage and natural environment	Medium	Westmeath County Council Heritage Officer	Westmeath County Council Heritage Support Programmes
b) Produce a 'booklet' of heritage sites / trails *	‣ Increased awareness of and access to Rosemount heritage ‣ Increased number of visitors accessing Rosemount heritage	Medium	Westmeath County Council Heritage Officer Westmeath County Council Tourism Officer	Westmeath County Council Heritage Support Programmes
c) Develop Hill Trail (link with Greenway and Village Centre	‣ Increased access to and enjoyment of the Hill ‣ Increased visitors to Rosemount	In Stages Short ➜ Medium	National Trails Office Westmeath County Council Tourism Officer	Outdoor Recreation Fund Leader Programme 2014 - 2020
d) Promote tourism of Rosemount (consider website)	‣ Increased awareness of and access to Rosemount heritage within Westmeath County and beyond ‣ Increased number of visitors/tourists to Rosemount ‣ Increased revenue into the village	Medium	Westmeath County Council Tourism Officer Fáilte Ireland	

e) Increase signage throughout Rosemount	‣ Increased awareness of Rosemount heritage Increased ease of access to Rosemount heritage	Short	Westmeath County Council Tourism Officer Westmeath County Council Heritage Officer	Westmeath County
f) Link with Centre Parc – promotion and brown signage	‣ Increased promotion of Rosemount heritage ‣ Increased number of visitors/tourists to Rosemount	Long	Westmeath County Council Tourism Officer	
g) Community Coffee shop / cart	‣ Increased interaction with visitors to Rosemount ‣ Increased revenue into the village	Short	Westmeath Community Development	Leader Programme 2014 - 2020

* Old Rail Trail, Cnoc Aiste, Kill Graveyard, Church, Holy Well, Rosemount House